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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COUNCIL FOR LIFELONG LEARNING
ANALYSIS

BILL #: CS/HB 79
RELATING TO: Sexual Offenders/School Bus Stops
SPONSOR(S): Council for Lifelong Learning and Representatives Kravitz, Fasano, and others
TIED BILL(S): None

ORIGINATING COMMITTEE(S)/COUNCIL(S)/COMMITTEE(S) OF REFERENCE:

- (1) CRIME PREVENTION CORRECTIONS & SAFETY YEAS 10 NAYS 0
- (2) JUDICIAL OVERSIGHT YEAS 10 NAYS 0
- (3) COUNCIL FOR LIFELONG LEARNING YEAS 14 NAYS 2
- (4)
- (5)

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I. SUMMARY:

CS/HB 79 adds "school bus stop" to the list of places of which a sexual offender under conditional release supervision cannot live within 1,000 feet.

The conditional release program permits an inmate convicted of certain crimes who is nearing the end of his or her sentence to be released under close supervision. If the releasee successfully completes the conditional release program, the inmate is no longer supervised by the court or by the Department of Corrections. If the releasee violates the conditions of his or her conditional release, the releasee is returned to prison and his or her gain time is forfeited.

Under current law, certain sex offenders under conditional release cannot live within 1,000 feet of a "school, day care center, park, playground, or other place where children regularly congregate." HB 79 amends the conditional release statute to add "school bus stop" to the list of places where a sexual offender on conditional release cannot live within 1,000 feet.

The council substitute makes it unlawful for any person who has been convicted of one of a list of specified sexual offenses against a minor less than age 16 to reside within 1,000 feet of any school, day care center, park or playground. This provision applies only to offenses that occur after October 1, 2002.

The effective date of the bill is upon becoming law.

There does not appear to be a significant fiscal impact associated with this bill.

II. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS:

A. DOES THE BILL SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1. <u>Less Government</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. <u>Lower Taxes</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. <u>Individual Freedom</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. <u>Personal Responsibility</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. <u>Family Empowerment</u> | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input type="checkbox"/> |

This bill does not appear to support the principle of less government because it will require the Department of Corrections to monitor the establishment of school bus stops to ensure that no sexual offenders under conditional release supervision are living within 1,000 feet of the bus stop.

B. PRESENT SITUATION:

Section 947.1405, F.S. creates the conditional release program. This program permits an inmate convicted of certain crimes who is nearing the end of his or her sentence to be released under close supervision.¹ If the releasee successfully completes the conditional release program, the inmate is no longer supervised by the court or by the Department of Corrections. If the releasee violates the conditions of his or her conditional release, the releasee is returned to prison and his or her gain time is forfeited. The Florida Supreme Court recently explained the purposes of the conditional release program:

The Legislature has determined that habitual offenders and offenders who have committed certain types of violent offenses after having served a prior commitment to prison should receive supervision after release. This supervision should help these former inmates in bridging the gap between prison and the outside world. To encourage releasees to comply with the terms and conditions of supervision, the program provides that if the releasee fails to do so, the releasee will be returned to prison and his gain time will be forfeited.²

An inmate sentenced to a prison term is given a "maximum sentence expiration date", which is the date that the inmate's sentence will expire.³ Each inmate is given a "tentative release date", which is the date that the inmate will be released from prison when all of the inmate's gain time is deducted from his or her sentence.⁴ When an inmate reaches 180 days prior to his or her tentative release date (the date the inmate will be released from custody if he or she fulfills all gain time requirements) or provisional release date (the date an inmate will be released in certain prison crowding situations), the inmate's records are reviewed by the Parole Commission.⁵ The Commission establishes the terms and conditions of the inmate's conditional release and may determine the length of the inmate's supervision when he or she is released on his tentative release

¹ See ss. 947.1405(1)-(8), F.S.

² *Duncan v. Moore*, 754 So. 2d 708, 710 (Fla. 2000).

³ See s.944.275(2)(a), F.S.

⁴ See s.944.275(3)(a), F.S.

⁵ See s.947.1405(5), F.S.

date or provisional release date.⁶ The period of conditional release supervision cannot exceed the maximum penalty imposed by the court.⁷

If an inmate had been convicted of certain sex crimes or sexual battery crimes⁸, the statute requires that, if the inmate is released on conditional release, the inmate must remain on conditional release for the remainder of the sentence imposed by the court.⁹ Subsection 947.1405(7)(a), F.S., also requires the Commission to impose the following conditions, in addition to any other terms and conditions it imposes:

1. Mandatory curfew;
2. If the victim was under the age of 18, a prohibition on living within 1,000 feet of a school, day care center, park, playground, or other place where children regularly congregate;
3. Participation in a sex offender treatment program;
4. Prohibition on contact with the victim;
5. Prohibition on unsupervised contact with children if certain conditions are met;
6. Prohibition on working at any school, day care center, park, playground, or other place where children congregate if the victim was under 18;
7. Prohibition on the possession of pornographic or sexually stimulating materials;
8. Submission of a DNA sample to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement;
9. Restitution to the victim; and
10. Submission to warrantless searches by the releasee's probation officer of the releasee's person, residence, or vehicle.¹⁰

If a person on conditional release violates the conditions of his or her release, the violation may be referred to the Parole Commission. The releasee is entitled to a hearing before the Parole Commission or its hearing officer.¹¹ After a hearing, the Commission may revoke the conditional release, impose new conditions on the release, or allow conditional release to continue.¹²

C. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

CS/HB 79 amends subsection 947.1405(7)(a), F.S., to include a "school bus stop" as one of the places of which certain persons on conditional release are not permitted to live within 1,000 feet. While it can be argued that a "school bus stop" is already covered by the prohibition on living within 1,000 feet of a place where "children regularly congregate," this bill makes this specific prohibition clear.

⁶ See s.947.1405(6), F.S.

⁷ See s.947.1405(6), F.S.

⁸ Crimes include violations of the sexual battery statute, ch. 794, F.S., violations of the lewd and lascivious acts statute, s. 800.04, F.S., violations of the statute prohibiting sexual performance by a child, s. 827.071, F.S., and violations of the statute prohibiting the selling or buying of minors for sexual activity, s. 847.0145, F.S.

⁹ See s. 947.1405(6), F.S.

¹⁰ See ss. 947.1405(7)(a)(1-10), F.S.

¹¹ See s. 947.141(3), F.S.

¹² See s. 947.141(3)-(6), F.S.

CS/HB 79 creates a new section in Chapter 794, F.S., to make it unlawful for any person who has been convicted of one of a list of specified sexual offenses¹³ against a minor less than age 16 to reside within 1,000 feet of any school, day care center, park or playground. The bill specifies the punishment for violation of this new section of law. This provision applies only to offenses that occur after October 1, 2002.

This bill takes effect upon becoming law.

D. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS:

See "Present Situation" and "Effect of Proposed Changes."

III. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT:

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on state revenues.

2. Expenditures:

The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on state expenditures.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on local revenues.

2. Expenditures:

The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on local expenditures.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

Persons who have been convicted of certain sexual crimes and are under conditional release supervision and currently live within 1,000 feet of a school bus stop may be required to change their residence as a result of the provisions of the bill.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

¹³ The specified sexual offenses are violations of the sexual battery statute, s. 794.011, F.S., violations of the statute prohibiting sexual activity with certain minors, s. 794.05, F.S. violations of the lewd and lascivious acts statute, s. 800.04, F.S., violations of the statute prohibiting sexual performance by a child, s. 827.071, F.S., and violations of the statute prohibiting the selling or buying of minors for sexual activity, s. 847.0145, F.S.

IV. CONSEQUENCES OF ARTICLE VII, SECTION 18 OF THE FLORIDA CONSTITUTION:

A. APPLICABILITY OF THE MANDATES PROVISION:

This bill is exempt from the requirements of Art. VII, s. 18, Fla. Const., because it is a criminal law.

B. REDUCTION OF REVENUE RAISING AUTHORITY:

This bill is exempt from the requirements of Art. VII, s. 18, Fla. Const., because it is a criminal law.

C. REDUCTION OF STATE TAX SHARED WITH COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES:

This bill is exempt from the requirements of Art. VII, s. 18, Fla. Const., because it is a criminal law.

V. COMMENTS:

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

The Florida Supreme Court recently rejected various constitutional challenges to the conditional release program. In *Duncan v. Moore*, 754 So. 2d 708 (Fla. 2000), the court rejected claims that the statute violated the double jeopardy clause, the ex post facto clause, the due process clause, and the equal protection clause.

In *Britt v. State*, 775 So.2d 415 (Fla. 1st DCA 2001), the court addressed whether the phrase "or other place where children regularly congregate" in subsections 948.03(5)(a)2, F.S., and 948.03(5)(a)6, F.S., (which is similarly worded to s. 947.1405(7)(a)2., F.S.) is unconstitutionally vague. The court ruled that the phrase is not unconstitutionally vague and gives the offender sufficient notice of what constitutes forbidden conduct.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. OTHER COMMENTS:

According to a Department of Corrections bill analysis, the department has encountered many obstacles enforcing the 1,000-foot limitations, which are required by current law on both post-prison release and supervised probation sex offenders. Offenders who currently live within 1,000 feet of school bus stops would be requested to move by the supervising officers, and if they fail to do so, a violation of conditional release will be reported to the Parole Commission. The Parole Commission and the courts are sometimes reluctant to move offenders from existing residences that were "legitimate" at the time of initial residence, especially if the offender is complying with the other conditions of supervision.

In its analysis, the Department of Corrections stated, "It is believed the school bus stop language would be virtually unenforceable due to the number of school bus stops and the geographical coverage, which would preclude the establishment of a residence within developed areas of a city or community."

CS/HB 79 takes effect upon becoming law. This creates the potential for sexual offenders under conditional release supervision who currently live within 1,000 feet of a school bus stop to be in violation of the law the moment this bill is signed into law. These individuals will have little, if any time, to change their residence. An amendment changing the effective date will avoid this situation.

VI. AMENDMENTS OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES:

On November 27, 2001, the Committee on Crime Prevention, Corrections, and Safety adopted three amendments.

- Amendment 1 expands the scope of offenders whose place of residency would be limited, to individuals convicted of violating specified sexual offenses upon a person less than age 16. Under the amendment, persons convicted of certain sex crimes that occurred after October 1, 2001, could not live within 1,000 feet of a school, day care center, park, or playground.
 - Amendment 1 could be challenged by an offender who commits a crime and is convicted after October 1, 2001 but prior to the effective date of the bill. That offender could argue that the residency requirement is additional punishment and prohibited by the ex post facto provisions of the state and federal constitutions. Ex post facto challenges have been rejected in cases where the court held the restriction was not punishment. See e.g. Kansas v. Hendricks, 521 U.S. 346 (1997) (allowing involuntary civil commitment of certain sex offenders because commitment was not “punishment” under the ex post facto provision); Collie v. State, 710 So. 2d 1000 (Fla. 2d DCA 1998) (defining someone as a “sexual predator” and requiring registration does not violate ex post facto provisions). If a court held that the residency restriction was not punishment under the ex post facto clause, the ex post facto provision is not implicated.
- Amendment 3 requires district school boards to regard the area within 1000 feet of the residence of a sexual offender to be a presumptively unsafe location to place a school bus stop.
- Amendment 4 changes the effective date of the bill so that it will now become effective upon becoming law.

On January 8, 2002, the Committee on Judicial Oversight adopted two amendments.

- Amendment 1 makes the crime created by Amendment 1 (by the Committee on Crime Prevention, Corrections, and Safety) only apply to offenders who commit their crimes after October 1, 2002. This amendment appears to remove any possibility that an individual could challenge this amendment on ex post facto grounds.
- Amendment 2 removes the language added by Amendment 3 by the Committee on Crime Prevention, Corrections, and Safety.

On January 31, the Council for Lifelong Learning adopted the bill with its traveling amendments and made the bill into a council substitute.

VII. SIGNATURES:

COMMITTEE ON CRIME PREVENTION CORRECTIONS & SAFETY:

Prepared by:
Eric Haug

Staff Director:
Trina Kramer

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AS REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIAL OVERSIGHT:

Prepared by:
L. Michael Billmeier, Jr.

Staff Director:
Nathan L. Bond

AS FURTHER REVISED BY THE COUNCIL FOR LIFELONG LEARNING:

Prepared by:

Staff Director:

Anitere Flores

Patricia Levesque